

# Record

JOURNAL OF THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION

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SOUTHERN BAPTIST HISTORICAL SOC  
701 COMMERCE ST STE 400  
NASHVILLE TN 37203-7560

PUBLISHED SINCE 1877

MAY 30, 2002

VOL. 126

No. 17

## Gulfshore celebrates silver anniversary

By Stacey Billger  
GBA summer intern

Twenty-five years of changed lives, memories, friendships, Christian fellowship, and spiritual renewal was celebrated at the Gulfshore Baptist Assembly (GBA) Silver Reunion May 17-19 in Pass Christian.

"It was like family coming home," said Frank Simmons, GBA manager.

The weekend was set aside for those who had served on the GBA staff at any time since 1978, when the facility reopened after being destroyed by Hurricane Camille in 1969.

"Since 1999, GBA has undergone many improvements and renovations made possible by the Mississippi Cooperative Program," said Simmons. "We wanted to have a time for all of those who had been a part of

light of the earth," said Simmons.

Experiences at GBA have carried over into some staff members' current ministries.

David Webb, a 1979 staff member currently serves as the youth education minister at First Church Holly Springs.

Feeling called to the ministry, Webb saw that GBA would give him a chance to "serve God, work with youth, and discover what God wanted me to do."

Paul Chrestman of Hernando took away similar skills. "I learned to be a servant, which has rounded out my ministry," he said.

Ben Skipper, student minister at Carterville Church, Petal, said, "At GBA I learned the importance of discipleship, and what it means to have an intense spiritual communion with God."

Janie Baylis, a current student minister at Fellowship



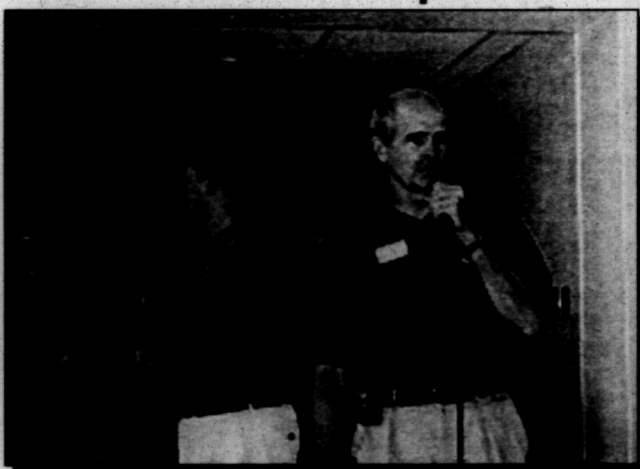
REUNION — Laura Holt, SaraJo Watson, Jennifer Collins, and April Clark share a meal during the Gulfshore Assembly silver anniversary. (Photo by Stacey Billger)

Church in Ocean Springs, added, "GBA is a special place that gets into your heart, not because of the place and putting it on a pedestal but because of what God did while you were there."

The year 1978 marked the first summer programs in the new facility, and the first year that college staff was used to provide the necessary labor support to run the facility.

"When you invest three months of your life here it becomes a part of your life," said Simmons. "GBA is more than a place, it's the people and the relationships, and a place for refuge and strength from the world."

GBA facilities and programs are supported by gifts to the Mississippi Cooperative Program and the Margaret Lackey State Mission Offering.



HOMEcoming — Frank Simmons (right) and an ice welcomes silver anniversary participants before cream fellow- the seafood banquet. (Photo by Stacey Billger) ship later that evening.

Saturday's activities included a seafood banquet and a special sharing time for former staffers to talk about their GBA summer experiences. The weekend concluded with a worship service led by Chad Davis, Hattiesburg, and Ben Skipper, Petal, both former GBA staff members.

Over the years GBA has served as a place for inspiration, renewal, and the presentation of the Gospel. GBA operates year-round to assist the ministries of the local churches through the provision of information, inspiration, and instruction.

GBA provides for its summer staff a "practical laboratory of everyday Christian living where college students can be equipped to serve in the world, and to learn to be the salt and

## B&H begins homeschool publishing

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP) — With the acquisition of materials previously published by a smaller company and several new books, Broadman & Holman (B&H) Publishers is the first major evangelical publisher to enter the homeschooling market.

The trade book division of LifeWay Christian Resources, B&H recently released the *Worldwide Guide to Homeschooling: 2002-2003* by Brian Ray, a compilation of statistics and facts on the benefits of home-based education. It will be updated annually.

This summer B&H will release *Thinking Like a Christian*, a 12-week curriculum package for high school students. Following in September is *The Heart of Homeschooling*, a trade book aimed at helping parents and others understand this specialized form of education.

"I think it's a significant step," Ray said of the Nashville publisher's decision to produce homeschool materials. "What I've watched over the last 10 years is coming to fruition. Basically, popularity breeds popularity. And, from what I know from the people at B&H, it's also a belief and a value that this is a good thing."

Ray, president of the National Home Education Research Institute, estimates between 1 million and 2 million children up to age 18 are currently taught at home. Reflecting its rapid

growth, he projects the number to reach 3 million by 2010, an increase of approximately 50%.

David Shepherd, senior vice president and publisher of B&H, said that while it is a relatively small niche, homeschoolers represent an expanding audience. He pointed to test marketing done two years ago at four LifeWay Christian Stores.

In those stores, homeschooling offerings outsold all other children's materials — including the popular Veggie Tales — according to Chris Rodgers, vice president of merchandising.

By the end of this year, 33 of its stores will carry homeschooling materials. "It seemed like a good market for us to get into," Rodgers said. "We are meeting a need."

"They're a small but consistent market," Shepherd said. "Homeschoolers have proven to be more willing to buy at retail than they used to; they still use catalogues and go to curriculum fairs, but more and more, as Christian book stores offer home-school products, the stores are like a year-round curriculum fair."

This summer's *Thinking Like a Christian* marks the debut of the publisher's homeschool curriculum. Written by Chuck Edwards, David Noebel of Colorado-based Sonlight Ministries, it is part of a 12-week course on *Worldviews in Focus*.

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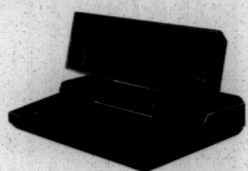
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VOLUME 126 NUMBER 17

(ISSN-0005-5778)

Published weekly except weeks of July 4 and Christmas by the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, 515 Mississippi Street, Jackson, MS 39201. Subscription \$8.35 per year payable in advance. Economy plans available for cooperating Mississippi churches. Periodicals postage paid at Jackson, MS. Member, Association of State Baptist Papers. Deadlines: News items — one calendar week prior to requested publication date. Advertising — two calendar weeks prior to requested publication date.

# For lack of a witness

This is a difficult editorial to write, because the subject matter is so difficult to face. Face it we must, however, if we are to understand why a whole generation of youth in need of the Gospel is slipping away farther and faster than most of us can comprehend. Face it we must, if we are to save them. Face it we must, if we are to be true to our Savior's call in Matt. 28:18-20.

Christina Long was a model sixth-grader at her religious school in Danbury, Conn., a distant suburb of New York City and one of the wealthiest enclaves in the country. Barely 13 years of age, she led her cheerleading squad, excelled in her religion class, and was active in church. Well-liked by peers and teachers alike, the easy-going, straight-A student seemed poised for an almost limitless future.

Christina Long died May 20, allegedly strangled to death while having anonymous sex on the back seat of a filthy old car in a mall parking lot with a 25-year-old married man she met on the Internet. Her lifeless body was dumped in a ravine in nearby Greenwich, Conn.

Christina had been leading a double life for some time, her devastated friends and family were soon to realize. Scanning chat rooms and using sexually-provocative screen names, Christina became immersed in the seamy Internet under-

world of adult-child sex.

Law enforcement officials have long warned of the dangers posed by sexual predators trolling the Internet for young victims. In Mississippi alone, there have been numerous arrests over the past few years of adults who allegedly used Internet chat rooms to entice minors into sexual relationships. Statistics indicate that young boys and girls are at almost equal risk of falling prey to these perverts.

It's sick, it's destructive, and it's growing as fast as the Internet itself. In Christina's case, she was a streetwise girl who had suffered through her mother's

and father's substance abuse problems until an aunt in Danbury was awarded custody. Streetwise and starved for the love her parents were incapable of giving her, she turned to the affections of cyber-pedophiles.

No one is sure when she started having sex with men she met on the Internet, but it's clear now that she had been sexually active for some time. Her accused murderer, illegal immigrant Saul Dos Reis, was not her first encounter with an Internet lover. Her computer files indicate there were many other men.

"It seems impossible to imagine, much less to reconcile," her pastor told NBC News after Christina's memorial service.

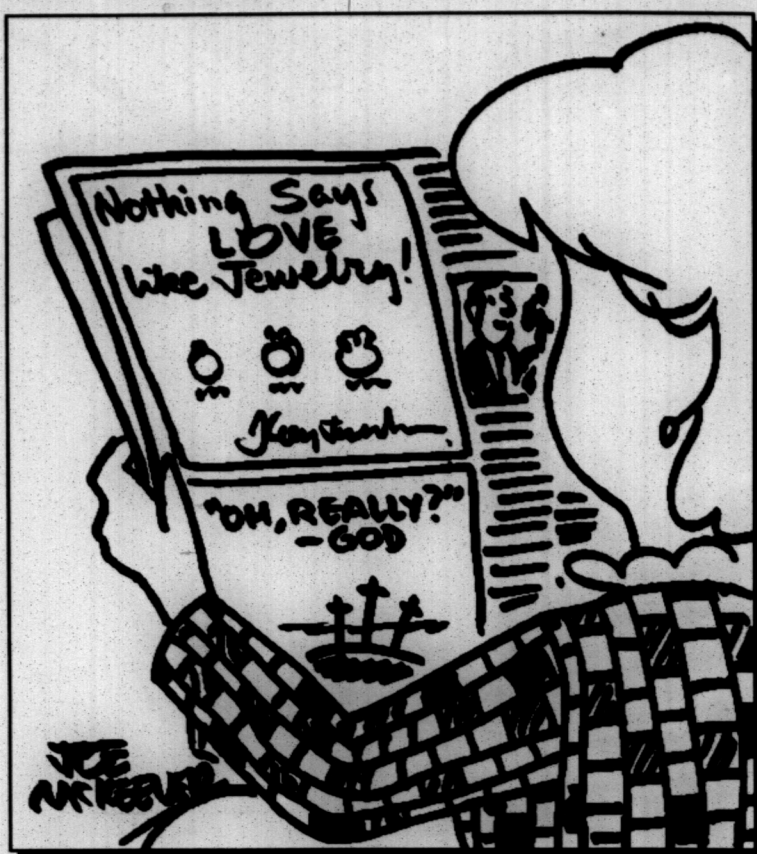
"I'm so devastated. She was a very good student and a very good cheerleader. She was very spirited, just a doll," one of her teachers told NBC News.

So how did such a good child go so wrong on the Internet? That's a question with which behavioral experts may struggle for years to come, but it seems pretty simple to this layman.

A child of financial means and private school privilege, her soul was sadly empty for the things that mean the most: being loved purely for oneself and having a sense of really belonging to someone.

The outside Christina — the good grades, the cheerleading — was a facade. The inside Christina, where it really counted, was in terrible pain.

As far as we know, no one told Christina that there is someone who indeed loved her purely for herself, who wanted so much for her to belong to him, who could have wiped out the pain she was feeling deep inside. No one ever told her about Jesus.



If we are going to win Christina's generation to Christ before it's too late for them, we'd better come to an understanding of what they are going through. We have to understand the emotional and spiritual tortures through which so many of them are forced to pass. We have to understand the emptiness of their lonely lives, and we have to come to grips with the unprecedented temptations they face every day — temptations most of us could never have imagined in our own youth.

We have to find a way to reach them. We just have to find a way. May our prayer be that not one more young, promising life be snuffed out for lack of a Christian witness in their lives.

We have to try. It will be a daunting task, but after the sacrifice Jesus made for us, how can we do any less for his little ones?

## GUEST OPINION:

### Take pride in U.S. military

By Capt. Bill Peoples  
U.S. Army Reserve

Most students go to class in buildings with no electricity, no running water, no windows, and no desks or chairs. They sit on canvas tarps on the floor. School supplies are scarcely available.

Although these conditions are not conducive to learning, the children of Afghanistan are eager students. They come up to

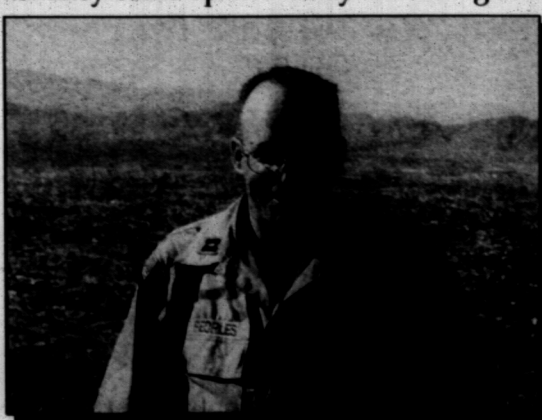
you and say in English "Hello" and "Thank you."

Each of the operations the Coalition forces conduct make the country a little safer and

adds to the long-term stability of Afghanistan. Each of the projects that we are doing here will improve the lives of the people of Afghanistan. The U.S. military is only here for the short-term, but hopefully the effects of our presence here will help the people of Afghanistan for the long-term and bring some stability to the government that

will result in lasting change and peace.

I know that Memorial Day is a special day to remember our flag. Last week was the first time since I've



Peoples

been in Afghanistan that I heard our National Anthem played. It sent a chill down my spine as a wave of emotion swept over me.

Those Stars and Stripes definitely have a special place in the hearts and minds of service men and women. They are the reason we are here. They stand for the valor and the blood of those who have defended our country from the plains of Bunker Hill to the rough ridges of the Shah-i-Kot Mountains here in Afghanistan, for the freedom that we defend part of which is to have freedom from terrorism, and for the love of country.

So as you pause to remember our flag, please also remember the soldiers, sailors, airmen, and Marines who proudly wear it on their right sleeves in far distant lands for each of you.

Peoples is the Media Operations Officer and 314th PAD Team Chief in Kabul, Afghanistan as part of the Coalition Joint Civil-Military Operations Task Force Public Affairs Office. He has been deployed since early December and in Kabul since mid January. His wife, Loretta, works for the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee in Nashville. They are members of Hermitage Hills Church, Nashville.



# Missionary ministers to deaf in Niger village

NIAMEY, Niger (BP) — Walking through the market place, the young woman peers into stall after stall. She weaves in and out of the overcrowded area. She crinkles her nose up at the wide variety of smells coming from the stalls and the piles of trash.

Finally, she sees that for which she is searching. A deaf girl is conversing, her hands rapidly forming symbols of communication. The young woman walks over and silently introduces herself to the girl, who is surprised that the stranger can speak her language — sign language.

The two talk for a while, and the girl promises to introduce Johnston to more of her friends.

Jessica Johnston, an International Mission Board (IMB) worker in Niamey, Niger, spends her days exploring the streets of the city in search of deaf people. The journeyman came to this West African country almost a year ago, with hopes of planting the seeds of the gospel among the deaf.

More than 1.22 million culturally deaf people live in West Africa, almost 4,000 of those live in Niger. Located north of Nigeria, 98% of the country's 10.4 million people identify themselves as Muslim.

In most communities, the deaf are considered "incomplete" people.

"Here, the word for deaf person literally means 'that person does not understand,'" Johnston said. "A lot of people think it is really silly for someone to be here working with the



**LUNCH BREAK TALK** — Jessica Johnston (third from right) explains how to play a game of Bible study to put everything in the right order for explaining to visual learners. Johnston visits the school during lunch break, just to "hang out" and talk with the children. (Photo by Sue Sprengle)

deaf. But, the deaf community has welcomed me with open arms. The families are excited to have someone talk with their children."

Johnston, who is serving in Niger through the IMB's Journeyman Program, quickly learned that her friends actually speak two different kinds of sign language. The educated speak a form brought in from outside of the country that is similar to American Sign Language. Since the culture is mostly oral and not literate, signs and stories are symbolic for everything, including names.

The second language, which is the heart language of almost all deaf in Niger, is Village Sign, which originated in Niger. It has been passed down from generation to generation.

Every day the Oklahoma

native hops in a taxi and journeys across town — just to hang out with one of her friends and learn the different sign languages.

On one of these daily trips, "hanging out" is a little different from the other places she frequents. Here, Johnston stories the Bible chronologically. Eventually, she hopes to share the Bible with her other friends, too.

Johnston spends hours preparing the lessons for the one-on-one Bible study. Since she is not deaf, she tries to imagine herself as her friend and the best way to communicate the story.

"Deaf people tell their stories a certain way," Johnston said. "They tell stories by first identifying where something happened, then when and what's going on, then give a description of who the story is about and then finally they get into the actual story."

"The Bible really isn't written in that exact layout," the journeyman said. "So, I do a lot

of Bible study to put everything in the right order for explaining to visual learners."

Since most of the people she works with are visual learners, Johnston also makes a "story board" for her notes. That way all of her work is reproducible by the local community and can be passed on from person to person.

Right now, there are no known Christians following Jesus among the deaf community in Niamey. At one time, one man — since deceased — made a decision to follow Christ. Word quickly spread throughout the deaf community about this one man falling away from Islam.

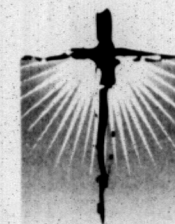
"The legend of this guy lives in my heart," she said. "Everyone in the deaf community talks about this guy. When they talk of him,

they always say, 'this is the one who followed Jesus.' They know he made a choice and what it was all about."

Johnston shares God's passion for the thousands of deaf in Niger who have never heard the good news of a loving God.

"In this deaf world, which hardly anyone knows about and functions on its own — separate from tribal disputes — are people waiting to hear the gospel," she said.

"The time for the deaf of West Africa is now," she said.



MISSISSIPPI  
BAPTISTS

THE  
SECOND  
FRONT PAGE

*Record*

PUBLISHED SINCE 1877

MAY 30, 2002

VOL. 126

No. 17

## Christian given life sentences

WASHINGTON (BP) — A Pakistani Christian accused of blasphemy against Islam has been sentenced to two life sentences, under a law the United States has unsuccessfully urged the nation's leader, Gen. Pervez Musharraf, to repeal. The sentence on Aslam Masih was handed down in the same week the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom released its third annual global report in early May, in which it said "grave violations of religious freedom" were still either being perpetrated or tolerated by Pakistan's government, CNSNews.com reported. Aslam Masih was arrested in 1998 and charged in Faisalabad under Pakistan's blasphemy laws, which mandate heavy penalties for those convicted of defiling the Koran or blaspheming Islam's founder, Mohammed. The double life term was accompanied by a fine of 100,000 rupees (\$1,670). Critics say the law is deplorable and is easily exploited by any Muslim with a grudge against a Christian or member of another religious minority. There have been reports of mobs rushing courtrooms to demand the death penalty, and some defense lawyers have been threatened or attacked. A judge was murdered in 1997 after acquitting two Christian defendants. Christians comprise about 1.7% of Pakistan's 160 million people. Christian church growth is calculated at almost four percent, and many believers take the adoptive surname Masih ("Messiah").

## Looking back

### 10 years ago

Betty Jane (B.J.) Frew, Baptist Student Union director at Hinds Community College in Raymond, retires after 34 years of service. "I'm just as happy and excited in the last year of my work as I was the first day I began," she says.

### 20 years ago

For the first time in history, Mississippi Baptists give more than three million dollars to the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for Foreign Missions. According to Marjean Patterson, director of the Mississippi Womans Missionary Union, gifts totaled \$3,101,191.87.

### 50 years ago

Riverside Church, Clarksdale, is organized with 73 charter members. Pastor C.C. Carraway, reports that while the church is meeting in a temporary facility, he hopes to move to a permanent location soon.



## Housing allowance protected

WASHINGTON (BP) — President Bush on May 20 signed into law the Clergy housing Allowance Act, a bill designed to protect a long-standing housing tax exemption for ordained ministers and other clergy. The measure passed both the Senate and House of Representatives without opposition.

The bill would add the following language to the tax code: "And to the extent such allowance does not exceed the fair rental value of the home, including furnishings and appurtenances such as a garage, plus the cost of utilities." The amendment would not apply to taxable years before 2001. Amended tax returns could be filed without penalty or interest under the bill.

Lawyers from the Southern Baptist Convention's Executive Committee, Annuity Board, and Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission, as well as other religious organizations, worked for the exemption's preservation.

## FamilyNet to offer radio spots

ST. LOUIS (BP) — FamilyNet Television will provide free, customized radio spots for pastors during the annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) and SBC Pastors' Conference June 10-12 in St. Louis.

Pastors will have the opportunity to record a customized tag to accompany four, pre-produced 30-second radio spots in a sound booth at the FamilyNet exhibit. The radio spots will be available in English and Spanish and are valued at \$1,500. There will be no charge for this service to participants and the spots can be used to air on local radio stations to generate church attendance.

This is the fourth consecutive year FamilyNet, a division of the Southern Baptist North American Mission Board, has provided this service. Additional information can be obtained at FamilyNetTV.com or by calling (800) 832-6638.

# Missionaries' perseverance commended

RICHMOND, Va. (BP) — Nearly 1,000 years of sacrifice and hard work by 60 retiring Southern Baptist missionaries were honored May 19 at the International Mission Board (IMB) Missionary Learning Center near Richmond, Va.

"You have seen colleagues come and go, yet you have persevered," IMB President Jerry Rankin told the retiring missionaries. "It hasn't necessarily been because you have been healthier and stronger. It hasn't been because you are deeper spiritually or more culturally adept to survive."

"You have served to retirement because God's hand has been upon you. He had a task for you to accomplish, and his grace has enabled you to stay the course."

Don Dolifka, who served with his wife, Mary, in Kenya for 34 years, echoed Rankin's comment, saying that without God's

many blessings, their work would not have been possible.

"Truly God can make a way," he said. "And when God makes a way it's worth waiting for."

Stanley Clark recalled the challenges and rewards he and his wife, Kathleen, encountered during 40 years in Argentina. He served as academic dean and president of a seminary in Buenos Aires, while she worked in the mission office.

Clark remembers seeing a sign with the words, "Yankee go home," during his years on the field. Though not always welcomed, God kept them safe and helped them to do his work, Clark said.

"It has been a pleasure," he said. "We've only done our duty and for that my God has truly been a blessing."

Though this year's group of missionaries will be stepping down from their overseas assign-

ments, they now have an equally important task here in the United States, Rankin said.

"Regardless of how long you served and how you may be dealing with the official — though for some temporary — closure on your missionary career, you have a continuing responsibility in your role as emeritus missionaries."

Through their example, other missionaries are coming forward to take their place, Rankin said.

Pointing out that 67 new missionaries were to be appointed by the IMB two days later, Rankin

told the retirees: "God has been faithfully calling others to step into the gap."

"God is calling the next generation of missionaries, that he



FORTY-FIVE YEARS — International Mission Board President Jerry Rankin presents service plaques to Eldon and Jo Ann Sturgeon, who were among 60 Southern Baptist missionaries recognized May 19 as emeritus missionaries of the IMB. Appointed in June 1957, the Sturgeons served almost 45 years in Mexico. (Photo by Sandy King)

might not be without a witness in that place where you have been dismantling the walls of resistance and setting in motion a spiritual harvest."

## Inmate: prison 'best thing' that happened to him

NEW ORLEANS (BP) — New Orleans Seminary (NOBTS) student Kenneth Foy says prison was the best thing that ever happened to him.

"That which was set up for my destruction was my salvation," said Foy, who graduated with a masters of arts in marriage and family counseling on May 17.

Foy's story began in 1985, when he was charged with four counts of robbery and sentenced to Orleans Parish Prison in Orleans Parish. The next day, he was charged with 12 more counts and then an additional 30 counts the following day for a total of 46.

"Right then and there, I knew what was going on was spiritual rejection," he said. "In the midst of it all, I began to cry out to the Lord." It was after the third day in prison that Foy accepted Christ as his personal savior.

"I told God I was sorry and kept telling him that," Foy said. "Prison and among all of these guys is not the place you want to break down and cry. The more I said I was sorry, the more tears I shed. It was like a purging. I promised I'd live for him but didn't know what that outcome would be."

As Foy began to grow in his relationship with Christ, he read an average of 40-50 chapters of the Bible daily for the first two years in prison. He said one young woman, who was a spiritual advisor from a local church, visited him every Monday. It was

his only outside connection, as she gave him literature that Foy studied in his prison cell.

After spending two years in Orleans Parish Prison, Foy was transferred to Washington Correctional Institute in Washington Parish, where he served as a pastor for the first time.

After being approached to lead a Bible study, Foy agreed to do so. Soon, he began to serve as pastor of Victory Faith Fellowship, a church in the prison. Under Foy's leadership, the prison church sponsored eight hungry children through regular contributions and helped send Bibles into Mexico, where they were used in Bible colleges in that country.

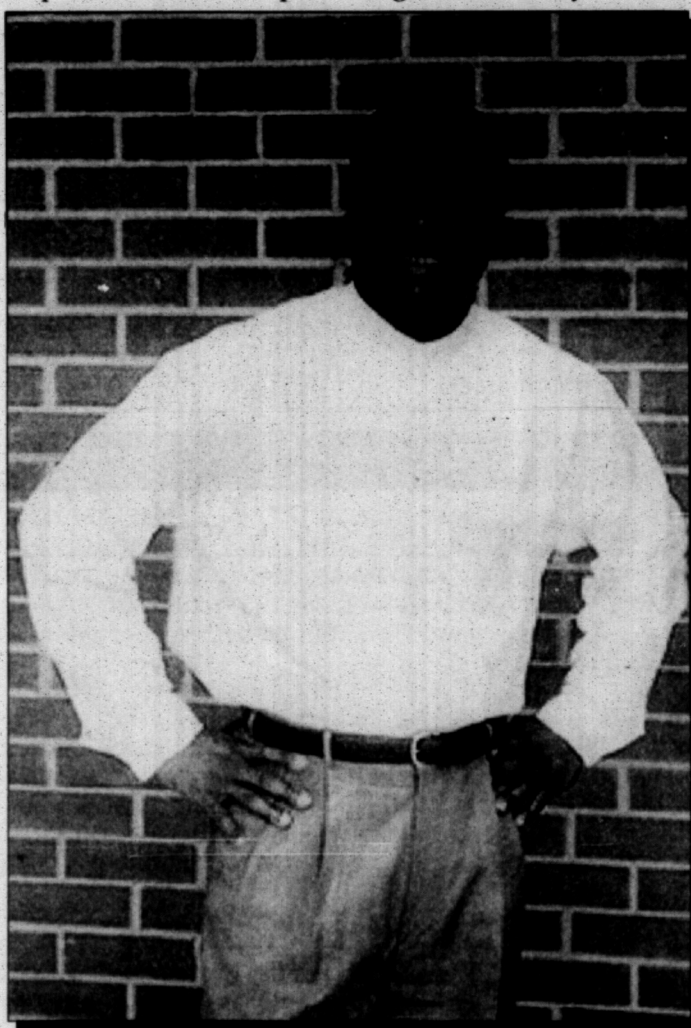
One of Foy's most monumental moments occurred when he was conducting a Bible study at Orleans Parish Prison.

A fellow male prisoner told everyone that he was tired of Bible study and threatened Foy's life.

"I had a decision to make," Foy said. "Would I bow down to him or do a Bible study?"

Foy chose to conduct the Bible study. With all of the prisoners attending that day, the man showed up as well.

The two men faced each other for 30 seconds. Amazingly, the man left. Foy learned later that evening that the man said later he was going to harm Foy but "something told him to hold back."



Foy

Five years later, Foy was conducting a Bible study at Washington Correctional Institute when the man came forward and accepted Christ.

For the first time, Foy learned the man's real name, as opposed to the alias the man used in prison. That was a major step in the rough world of prison life.

In addition to serving time at Orleans Parish Prison and Washington Correctional Institute, Foy also lived in the Baton Rouge Police Barracks and Avoyelles Correctional Institute before his release in June 1995.

All in all, he spent 10 years, two months, and three days in the four prisons.

While in prison, Foy earned 11 hours of class credit that transferred to NOBTS.

"I thought it would be a good thing to get some higher learning," said Foy, who earned the credit through the seminary extension program.

When he was released from prison, Foy met with a few staff members from NOBTS. After much prayer, Foy enrolled for classes in August 1995.

Eventually, Foy met Ken Taylor, director of supervised ministry and associate professor of urban missions NOBTS and pastor at Elysian Fields Church.

At the time, Foy was serving as pastor of New Life Ministry, which was meeting in his apartment.

The meeting between Foy and Taylor led to Elysian Fields Church allowing New Life Ministry to use their facilities.

"I see him as a person of good character who cares deeply about people," Taylor said. "He wants to do a quality job with his people."

Foy started New Life Ministry in his apartment with 12 people. Today 90 people meet to worship in the ministry.

With graduation only weeks away, Foy says he is excited to begin another chapter in his life.

"For me, graduating will be a special day because it's one of the times in my life that I've started something and finished it," Foy said.

"It's a seven-year journey," he pointed out, and I'm thanking God for that. The number seven is a number for completion.

"I'm excited also that I'm even more equipped to do greater work."



# Adopt-An-Annuitant Sunday set June 23

DALLAS (BP) — Southern Baptist churches across the nation will celebrate Adopt An Annuitant Sunday on June 23. The theme for this year's emphasis is "Lest We Forget."

Adopt An Annuitant Sunday is the day set aside each June by the Southern Baptist Convention to remember the thousands of aged ministers and their widows who unselfishly devoted their lives to the gospel ministry, but are now facing critical financial circumstances in their retirement years.

"Through the Annuity Board's Adopt An Annuitant program, Southern Baptists are embracing the godly servants and their spouses who have been our pastors and teachers," said O.S. Hawkins, Annuity Board president and chief executive officer.

With the support of individuals and churches, the Annuity Board's Adopt An Annuitant ministry currently provides monthly financial assistance to about 3,000 retired ministers and their widows living on meager retirement incomes.

"These people served at a time when little thought was given to planning for retirement — often in smaller, rural churches and missions that provided only a modest salary and little, if any, contributions toward a retirement account," said John Ambra, head of the Annuity Board's Endowment department.

"Many struggle to afford the basic necessities of life such as food, housing, prescription drugs, and medical care," he said.



Recipients of Adopt An Annuitant funds must meet guidelines for income, assets, and years of Southern Baptist service. Qualified recipients may be eligible for \$200 per month for an individual or \$265 per month for a couple.

Under the Annuity Board's new relief guidelines, more than \$6 million will be paid out annually in assistance to needy retirees. Almost \$1.4 million will come from the SBC Cooperative Program. Investment income on the Retired

Ministers' Support Fund provides some additional funding. The balance comes from the direct gifts of individuals, groups and churches in our Southern Baptist family through the Adopt an Annuitant and relief ministries of the Annuity Board.

The "Lest We Forget" theme for this year's Adopt An Annuitant Sunday demonstrates two primary ways Southern Baptists, through this ministry, are lifting up these needy individuals. First, remembering them with financial assistance affirms their many years of service and helps secure their day-to-day lives and future. In addition, the monthly check is an ongoing reminder to them that they are loved and not forgotten in their declining years.

"It is urgent that Southern Baptists step in to affirm their service and let these servants of God know they are loved and not forgotten," Hawkins said. "On Adopt An Annuitant Sunday, Southern Baptist congregations across the nation join together in extending God's care and compassion to his faithful servants — providing the comfort and dignity they deserve."

*Editor's note: Free bulletin inserts and a video explaining the Adopt An Annuitant ministry are available to use in worship services, Sunday School departments or mission-oriented organizations by calling (800) 262-0511 or by e-mail at adopt@absbc.org.*

## FBC Dallas plans new building

DALLAS (BP) — A proposed \$48 million, eight-story building that would provide Christian lifestyle ministries ranging from a coffee house to a brightly lighted prayer tower was met with approval from several thousand members of the First Church, Dallas.

Church leaders unveiled plans for the new eight-story building on May 5 at a special service held at the Dallas Convention Center. The congregation of one of the nation's most prominent Baptist churches responded positively to the planned facility, according to the Dallas Morning News.

Plans for the downtown building include a Christian bookstore, coffee house, sports-themed snack bar, a banquet hall for dinner theatres, classrooms, office space, and a prayer tower that would rise more than eight stories above the street.

The new building will also serve thousands of residents who live in or near downtown Dallas or who work near the church's downtown campus.

## OBES BAPTISTS

According to all of the studies, America has become the land of the free and the home of the fat! One out of every four American adults is obese and their obesity seems to start in early childhood — maybe even before getting home from the hospital. Just this week studies show that from 1982 till now, obesity among older Americans 50 and above has doubled.

At the front of the line of this "belly-busting" situation is Mississippi! Now, I don't know who it is that's supposed to be going around weighing all of us, but they say that most of us are too big.

The problem is that we overeat and under-exercise. For the majority of the population, it is a daily battle. The results are not good. A main problem resulting from the overweight condition is the huge numbers of other illnesses related to being overweight, i.e. diabetes, cardiovascular problems, and muscle and joint problems.

All are either initiated or intensified by our weight "gone overboard." That in turn has become a part of our national health crisis.

We need to diet and we don't, and even when we do, it's usually only between meals. Even the computer age has gotten involved in this "overweight" phenomena.

Diets and helps abound everywhere in cyberspace. E-diets.com claims to have almost ten million active participants. In addition, there is Weightwatchers.com and



## Directions

Jim Futral, executive director-treasurer  
Mississippi Baptist Convention Board

Dietsmart.com, both of which have their own followers. I guess you weigh less in cyberspace.

It is a measurable and sad problem among us but less noticed, and probably of greater alarm, is the number of *spiritually* obese folks there are. You may have seen some of these, or perhaps some of us may be some of these.

The issues are basically the same as when you get overweight in your flesh — you get too big, eat too much, take in too many calories, expend too little energy, and you sit, snack, and swell! When it comes to spiritual things, we can become obese because we take in huge amounts of the things of God and expend so little energy and effort putting them into practice.

Some of us want to spend endless hours at seminars and conferences that give us new things to think about and new insights into the things of God and that is absolutely wonderful if those things are translated into practical, personal, and spiritual adventures that keep us from just *bloating*, or even worse, *floating* over our intake.

So, what can we do? Well, for one thing — please keep eating! Eat good food, not just salty or

sugary things — but good foods! Don't just eat fat foods, but healthy, strengthening foods. Then, probably the single best thing you can do is to do something with what you have.

Get busy! The list could fill up this entire page, but I believe the Holy Spirit will prompt you to get busy doing something with what you have.

You could participate in a mission venture. It could be close to home, or the other side of the world — but get involved. You could witness to a friend who needs Jesus. It may be where you work, or it may take you across state lines. Make that

connection with somebody who you truly care for and know that they "know not Jesus."

You could go and make a visit to someone in jail, or to a person who has no one, or to a place where you can help the helpless. You could sit down and write a letter of encouragement that you have been putting off, or a letter of thanks, or even of confession.

Do a good deed for someone that you don't even know and you may never see again. Do a good deed for someone you see often but you have simply passed by without caring.

Right now, set aside procrastination and get moving! Not only may we slim down, we may strengthen up.

One thing is for sure, the good things of God that he invests in us, he intends for us to translate into care and love that people can see and feel. So, get up and get with it and I'll promise you that you will look better, feel better, and so will the world around you.

## Lotz remark leads to walkout protest

CHARLOTTE, N.C. (BP) — Anne Graham Lotz's description of homosexuality as a sin prompted several members of a Presbyterian church to walk out of a May 6 rally, The Charlotte Observer reported May 14. Lotz noted that the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks carried a message from God — "Repent of your sin and get right with me" — and included homosexuality among such sins, the newspaper reported.

The incident occurred during a rally on Charlotte's Spirit Square to promote Lotz's Nov. 15-16 "Just Give Me Jesus" meetings at the Charlotte Coliseum. The newspaper reported

that six or seven members of Seigle Avenue Presbyterian Church in Charlotte, assembled as part of a mass choir for the rally, left the Square.

R. David Kaylor, interim pastor of the Presbyterian church, preached in a subsequent sermon that Jesus had "a very different standard of judgment. He welcomed all people, but he especially welcomed those who were rejected by others," The Charlotte Observer reported.

"Anne's position is clear — that the Bible says homosexuality is a sin," an associate to Lotz, Leigh O'Dell, told the newspaper.



## JUST FOR THE RECORD

### Revival dates

**Looxahoma, Senatobia:** June 28-30; Fri. and Sat., 7:30 p.m.; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 7 p.m.; Desi Ginn, evangelist; Otha Geeslin, music; Alex Lawson, pastor.

**Poplar Springs, Newton:** June 9-12; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 7 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; Bryce Evans, Mobile, Ala., evangelist; Marion Felton, Newton, music; Charles Bonner, pastor.

**New Goodhope, Pulaski:** June 9-12; speakers are Sunday morning, Shirl Smith; Sunday night, Brian Parkman; Monday, Curtis Roland; Tuesday, Bob Smith; Wednesday, Glen Hayman; services, 7 p.m.

**State Boulevard, Meridian:** June 9-12; Sunday, 6 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; Michael Mason, evangelist; Ken Patterson, music; Kevin L. Jones, pastor.



GAs of First Church, Picayune

GAs and RAs of First Church, Picayune, were recognized May 15 for an outstanding year of service and participation. Husband and wife team, Paul and Stacy Reese lead the mission organizations. Bill Hardin is pastor.

Youth of Newhebron Church, Lawrence County, recently participated in the State Bible Drills at Petal-Harvey Church. Pictured (from left) are Stephanie Presley, Lauren Little, Kim Westmoreland, Julie Little, Patrick Sharp, and Corey Riley. The leader is Glenda Westmoreland.

RAs of Meadowood Church, Amory, were awarded Overall Best Chapter at Lad Crusader Day at Central Hills Retreat, Kosciusko, April 20. They also took first place in overall speak-out and first and third place in overall show and tell competition. RAs pictured are Nathaniel Talley, Jesse McCain, Zack Trantham, Aaron Palmer, Andrew Gray, Cameron Gray, Samuel



RAs of Meadowood Church, Amory

Palmer, Josh Maxey, Christopher Miller, Brady Thompson, Sam Douglas, Sam Baker, Andrew Douglas, Michial Miller, Quinn Cole, Trey Thompson, and Will Trantham. The director is Angie Thompson.



Youth of Newhebron Church, Lawrence County



RAs of First Church, Picayune

Children of First Church, Grenada, participated in the State Bible Drills on April 9 at First Church, Greenwood. Pictured (from left) are Ashland King, Whitney Dedmon, Kayla Carson, Cassie Cummings, and Karen Connerley, director.



Children of First Church, Grenada



Robin Hadaway, who lives in Brazil, was guest speaker at Robinwood Church, Saucier, on April 28. He is the regional leader for Eastern South America with the International Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention. Hadaway has pastored churches in California and Arizona and served as a missionary in Tanzania before assuming the responsibility of overseeing approximately 350 missionaries in Brazil, Paraguay, and Uruguay. Pictured (from left) are Tom Larkowski and James Kittrell, deacons; Frank Gunn, retired pastor of First Church, Biloxi; Hadaway; Bobby Wedgeworth, retired from Robinwood Church; and deacons Marvin Dearchs and Ralph Scott, chairman.



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**HURLEY BAPTIST CHURCH**, Hurley, Miss., is seeking a full-time minister of music and youth. Please send resume to: Hurley Baptist Search Committee, P.O. Box 395, Hurley, MS 39555.

**FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH**, Nettleton, Miss., is seeking a summer youth minister. For details call (662) 963-7341. Send resumes to: FBC Nettleton, P.O. Box 427, Nettleton, MS 38858-0427.

**OAKLAND HEIGHTS BAPTIST CHURCH** seeking bi-vocational minister of music to work with adult and youth choirs. Please send resume to OHBC, 5718 5th Street, Meridian, MS 39307.

**MID-SIZED CHURCH** seeking part-time minister of music. Steep Hollow Baptist Church, Poplarville, Miss. Two Sunday morning services plus Wednesday night services. Please call (601) 795-4638 or fax resume to (601) 795-4696.

**HILLCREST BAPTIST CHURCH** (which is re-locating to 5950 Terry Road in Byram) is looking for a part-time contemporary style worship leader. Please send resume to Victor Dorman, Hillcrest Baptist Church, 3102 Monticello Drive, Jackson, MS 39212 or fax to (601) 372-0285.



## JUST FOR THE RECORD



Children's choir and puppet team of Goss Church, Columbia

The Children's choir and puppet team of Goss Church, Columbia, presented The Easter Lily on March 24. The choir pictured (from left, front row) are Margaret Bourn, Jordan Easterling, Jessica Bourn, Madelyn Ard, Malori Ard, and Kate Lowery; (second row) Olivia Broome, Taylor Fortenberry, and Matthew Blansett; (puppet team, third row) Ashley Pounds, Trista Cooper, Melanie Saucier, Courtney McArthur, Taylor Davis, and Constance Bass; directors are Alicia Bass, Melinda King, and Jennifer Wood.

Nestor and Simon Cordero, originally from Mexico, stand in front of the flags at Maravilloso Salvador (Wonderful Savior) Church in Cleveland. "This newest mission of Calvary, Parchman, began March 1 in facilities provided by First Church, Cleveland, and now has four baptized members and serves six active families from Bolivar County's growing Hispanic population, now numbering

about 600," said Joe Young, pastor of Calvary Chapel, North Central Association.



Nestor and Simon Cordero

Children of Old Union Church, Lee County, recently held their annual Annie Armstrong Bike-A-Thon and raised \$400. Their contribution made the total offering exceed the goal of \$1,000. David Smith is youth director. Kenneth Kelly is pastor.

Anniversary Day will be held at Main Street Church, Mendenhall, on June 2. Activities will include Bible study at 9:45 a.m. and worship at 11 a.m. Billy Guest will be the speaker and Steve Bufkin, Griffith Memorial Church, Jackson, music. Dewitt Mitchell is pastor.

Children Bible drillers of Salem Heights Church, Laurel, (pictured, front row) are Tonja McGee; Lexie Smith; Emily Tolbert; Seth Holland; (second row) Meagan Ishee; Katie Hill;



Children of Old Union Church, Lee County

Maylen Musgroove; Kristi McGee; Blake Williams; June Jones, leader; (third row) Cassie Smith, leader; Anna Bryant; Melody Myrick; Allison Ryan; Quinton Allen; Chad Scitzs; (not pictured) Robbie Jefcoat, Halli Stokes; Lindsey Walters; Elizabeth Williams; and Bobbie Powell and Becky Pruitt, leaders.



Children of Salem Heights Church, Laurel

## HOMEcomings

Southside, Lucedale: June 2; 31st anniversary; morning service will include a praise and worship service led by Brad Howard and Benji Rigney; Sunday School, 9:15 a.m.; wor-

ship, 11 a.m.; dinner on the grounds; sharing and singing, 1:30 p.m.; Tim Buford, pastor.

Parkview, Leland: note burning and homecoming; July 7; for additional information, contact Henry Wilson at (662) 686-9621 or e-mail Louise Etheridge at eaglecc1@bell-south.net.

Eden (Yazoo): June 9; 95th anniversary; Sunday School, 9 a.m.; worship, 10 a.m.; Jeff Parker, guest speaker; lunch following morning worship; afternoon testimonies and praise service; Albert Grey, pastor.

New Hope, Coffeeville: June 2; 10:45 a.m.; Frank Mixon, former pastor, speaker; dinner on the grounds; singing in afternoon.

Coldwater, Philadelphia: June 9; worship, 10:30 a.m.; potluck dinner; singing featuring Southern Heritage, 1:30 p.m.; Mike Ragland, pastor.

Parkhill, Jackson: June 9; Sunday School, 9:45 a.m.; service, 11 a.m.; covered dish luncheon; Delton Beall, guest speaker; Jim Chance, music.

Smyrna (Copiah): June 2; 11 a.m.; noon meal; afternoon singing; Thad Owens, Brookhaven, speaker; Mark Brown, Bogue Chitto, music; Brenda Byrd, Sontag, pianist; Darrell White, pastor.

Union, Brookhaven: June 9; worship, 11 a.m.; covered dish luncheon, 12:15 p.m.; singing, 1:30 p.m.; Billy Joe Deer, guest speaker; Hosanna, featured singers; John Fisk, Sr., pastor.

Bear Creek (Attala): June 2; 10:30 a.m., followed by dinner on the grounds Gospel singing in the afternoon; message by Doug Wise, pastors.

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**BEVERLY'S TOURS & TRAVEL**, Starkville, Miss., Christian Fellowship & Fun. Gulf Deep Sea Fishing May 26-27; Smokies Silver Dollar Rod Run May 29-June 1; Worship with Dr. Charles Stanley June 8-9; Rocky Mountain High/Yellowstone July 8-19. Call Beverly Rives at (662) 465-8805 for information.

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3. I believe Jesus died and rose from the grave to forgive my sins and to restore my relationship with you. *(I believe in Jesus.)*
4. By faith, I invite Jesus Christ into my life. From this time on, I want to live in a loving relationship with him. *(I receive Christ as my Savior and Lord.)*

But as many as received him, to them he gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in his name (John 1:12).

If you make a decision for Jesus Christ today, contact a local Baptist church for spiritual guidance.





Brown, Thompson, Lucka, Wallace, Bowlby, Jackson, Hill, Allen, and McMillen

## Brookhaven church marks 100th year

Harmony Church, Brookhaven, will celebrate its 100th year on June 9 with old fashioned day. Activities will include Sunday School, 10 a.m.; worship in song with Midnight Cry, 10:30 a.m.; worship service with George Meadows, 11 a.m.; followed by dinner on the grounds; and music by The Southern Praise Quartet at 1:30 p.m. Clarence Young is pastor.

## VBS dates

**Branch, Morton:** June 17-21; 6-8:30 p.m.; Saturday, June 15, fun day, 2-3:30 p.m.; age 3-youth.

**Clear Branch, Florence:** "Godzwerkus Circus," June 3-7; 6:30-9 p.m.

**Strong Hope, Wesson:** July 15-19; 8:30-11:45 a.m.; commencement, July 21, 7 p.m.; Penny Martin, director; David Crowe, pastor.

**Wayside, Vicksburg:** June 3-7; 8:30-11:30 a.m.; Larry W. Haggard, pastor.

**Cowart (North Central):** June 3-7; 5:30-7:30 p.m.; Larry W. Yarber, pastor.

The William Carey College (WCC) Department of Theatre recently honored students at its 2002 Award Dinner on the Hattiesburg campus. The annual event recognizes the accomplishments of theatre students during the current school year.

Charlie Wallace, a senior theatre major from Hattiesburg, received the theatre's highest award, Most Valuable Member of Serampore Players. Kristi Allen, a senior theatre major from Biloxi, received an Acting Achievement Award. Karen Bowlby, a senior theatre major from Zachary, La., was awarded the Mark Wilkinson Memorial Scholarship. This scholarship was established by friends of the late Mark Wilkinson to benefit theatre majors. Wilson was a theatre graduate of WCC. An Acting Achievement Award was presented to Joseph Brack, a senior theatre major from Whitman, Mass. Zack Brown, a senior theatre major from Tupelo, received a Technical Achievement Award for his lighting design of WCC's MacBeth. An Acting Achievement Award was presented to Jonathan Hill, a senior theatre major from Southaven. Kevin Jackson, a junior theatre major from Meridian, was awarded the Bob Crumpton Memorial Scholarship. This award was established in memory of a civic and denominational leader of Pensacola, Fla. A Technical Achievement Award was presented to Kristina Lucka, a senior theatre major from Bratislava, Slovakia. Audrea McMillen, a junior theatre major from Tupelo, received the Obra L. Quave Theatre Award. Funded by alumnus John Clearman, this award is presented to a theatre student who excels in the college theatre program. She also received an Acting Achievement Award. The Doris Schneider Scholarship, given to a theatre student who exhibits unusual talent or ability in an area of technical theatre, was presented to Clint Thompson, a junior theatre major from Columbia. The scholarship is given in honor of a distinguished theatre alumna who teaches in a state university in North Carolina. Students pictured (from left, back row) are

Brown, Thompson, Lucka, Wallace; (front row) Bowlby, Jackson, Hill, Allen, and McMillen.

Four students from the Winters School of Music at William Carey College advanced to the final round of competition at the National Association of Teachers of Singing state conference held in Cleveland recently. Samantha Breland of Wiggins placed first in the Graduate Women category. Stephanie Crumbley of Oak Grove placed second in the Sophomore Women division, and Bradley Stephens of Sumrall placed second in the Freshman Men division. Katrina Cox of Laurel placed third in the Freshman Women category. Pictured (from left) are Cox, Crumbley, Stephens, and Breland.



Tannehill

William Carey College alumni office will host a luncheon during the Southern Baptist Convention on June 11 at 12:15 in room 231, Level II, of the Cervantes Convention Center. Tickets are \$15 and can be purchased at the William Carey College booth in the exhibit hall.



Thomas, Kennedy, and Sessums



Cox, Crumbley, Stephens, and Breland

The Step Up! Fastpitch Softball Skills Camp will be held at Timberton Softball Complex on June 13 and 14 from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. each day. Emphasis will be on intensive quality instruction in the fundamentals of fastpitch softball and will be designed for players of all ages (6-18) and skill levels. Instruction will be provided by the William Carey College softball staff and local high school coaches. Also available through the Step Up! program is individual instruction in pitching/ catching, hitting, or any aspect of the game of fastpitch softball at anytime during the summer months. For more information or to register a child for the camp or individual instruction, call or contact Joe Garvin jgarvin@wmcarey.edu, (601) 318-6431 (office), or 264-8536 (home).

Josh Tannehill, a native of Jackson and a senior music major at William Carey College, received a first place award and \$500 cash at the Mississippi Symphony Concerto Competition held recently in Jackson. Earlier this year, he placed first in guitar solo at the National Federation of Music Clubs state conference. Tannehill plans to attend the University of Akron in Ohio for his graduate degree in guitar performance and later teach.

Terry Dale Cruse of Columbus received the School Spirit Award and the Presidential/Board of Trustees Award at the annual Honors Day ceremony held recently at William Carey College (WCC). Cruse, a communication major, received the School Spirit Award from George Berger, alumni president. The award is given to a graduating senior by the WCC Alumni Association to recognize the student's outstanding citizenship, loyalty, and future interest toward WCC. The Presidential/Board of Trustees Award recognizes leadership and scholarship. This award was presented by Larry Kennedy, president of WCC. Cruse was also named the Outstanding Public Relations Student. Cruse of Columbus is pictured here with Kennedy, after Honors Convocation held recently on the Hattiesburg campus.



Cruse and Kennedy

Blue Mountain College will have a booth at the Southern Baptist Convention. A breakfast meeting, for the Ministerial Association, will be held in the dining area of the Marriott Pavilion on June 11 at 7 a.m. The meal will cost \$13.45 per person and reservations are not needed. If you have any questions, you may contact Blue Mountain College at (662) 685-4771, ext. 131.

The annual Honors Day ceremony was held recently at William Carey College (WCC). Larry Kennedy, president of WCC, presented the Jenkins-Chastain Citizenship Award to Benji Sessums of Lena and Pam Thomas of Columbus. This award serves as the highest honor given by the college as it recognizes the man and woman who have made the most significant contribution to student and college life in exemplifying those qualities of citizenship upheld by the college. Thomas also received the Who's Who Among Students in American Universities and Colleges national recognition as an outstanding leader. Pictured (from left) are Thomas, Kennedy, and Sessums.



## IGNORE SCRIPTURE?

Editor:

I am sickened and saddened by the letter in the April 11 issue of The Baptist Record from Ed Williamson. The saddening thing about this was the perversion and twisting of Scripture. Williamson referred to two passages. In the first passage, 1 Tim. 2:12, he tried to rationalize it away by making it something that only fit the first century culture - but the following verses make it clear that Paul based his arguments on the creation and fall, and thus it is applicable to all generations.

The second reference, Gal. 3:28, is also abused. The context of this verse is salvation and becoming an heir of Christ. The passage is not talking about places of service in the church, but redemption.

I would also add that 1 Tim. 2:12 prohibits a woman song leader, choir director, and worship leader as well as a woman teacher of a couples class. However, we as Southern Baptists have ignored this clear teaching of the Scripture like we do with what Jesus said in Matt. 23:8 - Don't let anyone call you doctor (didaskalos). That is an exact translation of the Greek.

I do see the difference between a woman song leader and the pastor of a church, but should we condemn a practice that violates the teaching of Scripture and then practice something that is also forbidden by the same verses?

Jerry Dale Patterson, pastor  
Wayside Church, Scobey

## AGAINST GOD'S LAWS

Editor:

Kudos to David Gushee (When children are sacrificed; p. 3, 04/25 issue) and Robert Reccord (Reccord: Infidelity destroying lives, ministries; p. 4, 04/25 issue). Here is one for the books encompassing both: a married man seducing a teenager in a sexual fantasy relationship. You don't hear of that much because it is swept under church carpets and is not illegal in Mississippi.

Well, it's against God's laws and moral standard. Therefore any pastor, deacon, Sunday School teacher, choir member, or pew sitter who lures a child, even a teenager, into this type of behavior is guilty of sacrificing children and shipwrecking ministries, and so is the church that conceals it.

These victims are just as damaged as rape victims requiring extensive and expensive counseling. When will our state legislators care enough to enact laws which protect children up to 18 years of age from sexual abuse, whether physical or by e-mail? You'd be shocked at the perversions permitted in Mississippi.

Better yet, when will Christians take a stand for God's honor and demand moral purity and accountability

(especially in leaders), give due support to victims and families, and stop covering sex sins but seek true repentance in those who commit them. Now, that would glorify God!

Alice Talley  
Columbus

## INTELLIGENT DESIGN

Editor:

The April 25 issue included an editorial entitled, In search of the real Eve, in which the writer came out strongly against evolution and evolutionary theory. When are we all going to realize that there is no conflict between evolution and Scripture?

Evolution has happened and it has been observed and documented in both nature and lab experiments. Many Christians seem to be under the false assumption that "belief" in evolution equals evil. People who accept evolution are not trying to get away from God (as the editorial writer insinuated), rather they are seeing God's hand by looking at evidence that we currently have.

Not long ago, creationist Jim Brady wrote a letter to the editor, saying he has published a 44-page book called, The Complete Evolution Refuter. I am currently writing a book of my own as a sort of response to Brady's book. Brady has done nothing more than reinforce what I said a long time ago. All of the arguments against evolution have been debunked many times over, but creationists simply ignore the evidence against them. They appeal only to religious prejudice. The Bible tells us to look, not to Scriptures alone, but to nature and the heavens (universe) as well, to see God's hands at work.

Everything about evolution suggests God's intelligent design in nature. Everything about the Big Bang theory points to God's intelligent design of the universe. Thus, evolution equals intelligent design by God.

Michael Williams  
Jackson

## CHOICE SERVANT

Editor:

On April 2, God called out of this life one of his choice servants after allowing him to pastor for 56 years. Robert E. Jones preached four revivals for me and I found him to be a deeply spiritual, expository preacher whose messages left impressions for months into the future.

As his director of missions in Natchez, I found he was always on time for any appointment. If he told you he would be at your office at 11 a.m., you would find him walking through the door at that exact time.

Any time I visited his church at Washington, he always had a great Bible-based message. He was a great student of the Holy Scriptures. In our seminary extension courses, he was the most sought-after teacher in our association.

Preaching was a serious thing to him, and he gave it his best in preparation. He always asked himself, "Is what I have to say today so important (that) people will risk their lives to come hear it?"

Robert E. Jones gave me some great advice over the years. My life will never be the same because he crossed my path. My final word to him is: "Walk well in the heaven to which you have gone."

Olyn F. Roberts, pastor  
Yellow Creek Church  
Louisville

## SAD STATE

Editor:

After reading about a church receiving the Eagle Award, I was grieved because it represents the sad state of most churches. This church had enrolled 502 more people in Sunday School but their attendance increased by only 115. What good is it to enroll people who won't attend? There used to be a practice among churches that one had to attend for three Sundays

before being put on the roll; this kept churches from inflating the rolls.

Our convention boasts about being 16 million strong but we know this is false. According to the Strategic Information and Planning Department of LifeWay Christian Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention, only 5.2 million bother to show up on Sunday morning - only 32.8%. How tragic! What's worse is that only 12% attend on Sunday night.

If only 32% of students attended school it would be seen as a national tragedy and addressed immediately, but most churches see this as the norm. What does the Lord say about such conduct? "I will come to you quickly and remove your lampstand from its place - unless you repent" (Rev. 2:5).

When are churches going to wake up and realize that the way people are being brought into church isn't working? Read the Great Commission. Only disciples are to be baptized and brought into the church. When we begin to do this, we will see a change. Yes, we may no longer have 16 million but at least we will have a truer, regenerate church membership.

Thomas Winn  
Jackson

## SPIRIT GRIEVED

Editor:

It grieves my spirit very deeply to read so many letters about the woman pastor. When will well-meaning Christians learn that God's Word is absolute and cannot be changed? When Paul wrote by the Holy Spirit 1 Tim. 2:12, he included no commas or quotation marks but a period. It is absolute.

Those who kick against God will surely get a badly injured foot. Mal. 3:6 states, "For I am the Lord, I change not..." Any abridging of God's Word will only bring hurt.

Irel Rackley  
Ridgeland



## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

*Unsigned letters will not be printed. No multi-copy or form letters will be used.*

*Each correspondent must include an address and telephone number for verification. In special instances, name may be withheld at writer's request and editor's discretion.*

*Please include the name of cooperating Mississippi Baptist church where correspondent is a member. (Mississippi Baptists' letters will receive priority when space is limited.)*

*Letters must be limited to 250 words. All correspondence is subject to editing.*

*Correspondents should refrain from personal attacks. The opinions expressed in letters to the editor do not necessarily reflect the views of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board.*

*No more than one letter from any individual will be printed during a three-month period.*

*When in the judgement of the editor a given issue has received sufficient attention, correspondence dealing with it will no longer be published and a notice will be printed to that effect.*

## STAFF CHANGES

**Central Church, McComb,** has called **Richard Tracey Hipps** as pastor, effective April 16. He is a graduate of Jones Junior College, Ellisville; Southeastern Baptist College, Laurel; and Southern Baptist School for Biblical Studies, Jacksonville, Fla. Hipps previously served Canaan Church, Columbus.

**Sidney Davis** has recently retired from the active pastorate. He is available for supply, interim work, and revival meetings. His address is 972 SCR 19, Taylorsville, MS 39168 or call (601) 782-9309.

**Goss Church, Columbia,** has called **Ron Kitchens**, a student at William Carey College, as minister of music. Kitchens has also served as associate pastor and youth pastor. He has served at Cruger Church, Cruger, and in Florida, South Dakota, and Lake Village, Ark. Mark McArthur is pastor.

**First Church, Aberdeen,** has called **Mark Reginal Stokes** as pastor effective May 26. He previously served at Enon Church, Morris, Ala.

**Bethany Church, Bay Springs,** has called **Darrel Craft** as pastor as of April 1.

**Cliff Temple Church, Natchez,** has called **Joel Haire** of Crystal Springs as interim pastor effective April 28.

**Gatesville Church, Crystal Springs,** has called **Matt Armstrong** as pastor, effective April 14. Armstrong was ordained at Harmony Church on Feb. 24 and was serving Gatesville Church as interim pastor prior to being called as pastor.

**Crossroads Church, Mantee,** has called **Billy G. Floyd** as pastor effective April 7.

**Carl Mason** has resigned as pastor of Pleasant Valley Church, Franklin Association, and is available for pastorate, interim, supply, revivals, and special music. For more information, he may be contacted at (601) 567-2012 or 15609 Hwy 98 E., Smithdale, MS, 39664.

**Easthaven Church, Brookhaven,** has called **Chris Sheppard** as student minister. He previously served at First Church, Ellisville.



Hipps



Kitchens



Floyd



## FAMILY BIBLE STUDY

### God wants me to be loving

1 Samuel 18:1-19:7

By Ruth V. Gamble

For the next nine weeks we will examine spiritual qualities which God desires to produce in believers' lives. Each week will focus on a person in the Old Testament who exemplified one characteristic of the fruit of the Spirit given in Galatians 5:22-23. Note that the passage in Galatians speaks of the fruit as singular, but gives numerous evidences of that fruit. The first one given is LOVE.

What was the first Bible verse you ever learned? It was probably 1 John 4:8b — "God is love." Do you remember the first song you learned in Sunday School? It was very likely Jesus Loves Me.

A primary theme in Scripture

is love. It has been said that the Bible is God's love letter to his people. The story of David and Jonathan is a beautiful example of godly love.

David, a lowly shepherd boy, had risen to a place in the court of King Saul. Here Jonathan, the king's son, and David became friends. 1 Samuel 18:1, 4 tells us that "Jonathan became one in spirit with David ... and Jonathan made a covenant with David because he loved him as himself ... And Jonathan took off the robe he was wearing and gave it to David, along with his tunic and even his sword, his bow and his belt."

The idea of "covenant" is a dominant theme in Scripture



Gamble

showing a relationship of commitment between two parties. Jonathan's gifts were evidence that he was giving himself and his right to the throne to David, and that he had accepted the fact that David would someday be king and not himself.

As the story unfolds in chapters 18-20, Jonathan proved his loyalty and love to David by serving as mediator and savior when Saul, in a jealous rage, attempted to kill David.

In saving David's life, Jonathan sacrificed his own right to the throne. Scripture does not tell us of any contribution David made to this covenant other than his pledge of faithfulness to the covenant concept.

In chapter 20 the covenant was restated and Jonathan requested of David: "Show me unfailing kindness ... and do not ever cut off your kindness from my family." After

Jonathan's death, when David did become king, he honored his commitment to the covenant by extending great kindness to Jonathan's crippled son, Mephibosheth.

Such love and sacrifice show in this Old Testament story picture for us the ultimate love and sacrifice of Jesus. Romans 5:8 says that God demonstrated his own love for us in that, even while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

We have nothing to offer as our fulfillment of the covenant agreement, but our love and service to our Lord.

What is love? Is it affection, adoration, an emotional attraction, a strong liking for someone or something? We say that we "love" some special food, person, possession, or activity. We "love" ice cream, our children, our church, our friends.

The secular worldview is driven by self-interest, a "me-first" attitude, and there is little or no good will extended to those who cannot return good.

For the Christian, love is a willingness to forfeit self-interest and seek the best for others without any promise of reward.

Love is not only a characteristic of God, it is his very nature. Jesus told his disciples that people would know they were his followers when they showed their love for one another (John 13:35). Love was to be shown by service and sacrifice.

In the story of David and Jonathan the term "chesed" is translated "unfailing kindness, mercy, love, lovingkindness, covenant love." This Hebrew word closely parallels the New Testament Greek word "agape" used by Jesus and in Galatians 5:22.

This is the love produced by the Holy Spirit that reflects the love which is God's nature, demonstrated in the life and sacrificial death of Jesus Christ. It is to be clearly evident in each of us who is a follower of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Gamble is a member of Slayden Church, Holly Springs.

## EXPLORE THE BIBLE

### Following God's direction

2 Samuel 1:1-2:7

By Bart Walker

"Following God's direction" almost sounds easy, doesn't it? You know that great Psalm of David, "The Lord is my Shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: He leadeth me beside the still waters."

Isn't that the way it is supposed to be? Without the context of the whole of Psalm 23, or the whole of the Bible for that matter, we might think that following God's direction is like a pleasant, sunset stroll through a green meadow with a cool spring breeze blowing across our faces.

We tend to want to forget, or at least avoid the possibility of, any "walk through the valley of the shadow of death."

David's life is a wonderful, living-color illustration of the Psalm he is most famous for. Up to this point (2 Samuel 1:1-2:7)

David's journey has included many "green pasture" and "still waters" moments, but also several strolls through valleys where the shadow of death fell across the figure of this young man after God's own heart. This made his experience more like a hair-raising ride on roller coaster than a pleasant sunset stroll!

David's life was filled with opportunities for following God's direction. From the youthful shepherding days of killing lions, bears, and uncircumcised Philistines to the privilege of being anointed as the next king; to the painful years on the run as a fugitive whose life was threatened by God's anointed at every turn, David's life was rife with possibilities for failure and success. David displays an undying sensitivity to the leading of God.

We would tend to think that,



Walker

after all of the abuse David had suffered at the hand of Saul, he would delight in the fact that his nemesis has finally met his demise. Because David has constantly sought direction from God, he responds with the heartbeat of the Almighty beating in his own chest.

**Needing God's Direction:** Rather than celebrating the death of a personal enemy, David mourned the loss of God's anointed leader. David swiftly established his leadership and demonstrated his respect for God's authority by giving speedy justice to the one who had lifted his hand against the Lord's anointed (Saul). It is likely that the Amalekite mentioned in 1:13 came upon Saul after he had fallen on his own sword (1 Chron. 10:4) but had not yet died. Many commentators believe the Amalekite lied, having encountered Saul after he was dead, and plundered his body.

David immediately understood what was before him. The first king of Israel was now lying

in the dust of defeat with his head and armor on display in the house of Dagon, the armies of Israel were fleeing in disarray, and the cities near Mount Gilboa were deserted to the Philistines.

David had also lost his best friend, one whose love was "more wonderful than the love of women." David's friendship with Jonathan was one of courage and enduring love; love greater than situations, family ties, and political strains.

As much as at any time in his life, David realized he needed God's direction. As he saw that his kingship might be unfolding, he turned at this critical time to seek God's direction.

**Seeking God's Direction:** Instead of trying to rush the plan of God by taking matters into his own hands, David inquires of God, "Shall I go up to one of the cities of Judah?" David never presumed upon God's anointing him through Samuel in 1 Samuel 16. He sought God's direction on how he should begin his ascent into leadership. David listened carefully to God's plan so that he could bring ultimate unity back to the nation.

**Following God's Direction:**

As David sought the will of God, he gave no argument when that will was revealed. He took his family and went to Hebron, the burial place of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. There the men of Judah anointed him king, which fit into God's timetable.

There are three truths to take home with us from this lesson. First, the act of waiting for God to work out his plan sets the stage for us to follow God's direction. David waited without growing callous, bitter or disinterested in God's ultimate will for his life.

Second, waiting for God to work out his plan brought opportunity for David to be placed where God wanted him at the appointed time. Had David tried to rush his ascent, he would have found himself working against the Lord's anointed and out of the will of God. Third, when God places us, we must trust his placement one step at a time! Not all of God's plan unfolds at once, and he may ask us to wait not only for his directions, but also to wait for them to unfold in their entirety!

Walker is pastor of Parkway Church, Natchez.

## Guidelines for submitting news and photographs

The Baptist Record is pleased to publish news and photographs of special events that take place in cooperating churches of the Mississippi Baptist Convention.

News submitted for publication in The Baptist Record must be either (a) typewritten, (b) neatly printed on 8 1/2 by 11-inch paper, or (c) neatly printed on standardized forms provided by the newspaper. All articles must be received in writing; no articles will be accepted over the telephone.

News may be submitted electronically to the address below, and must be contained in the message segment of an e-mail form. Due to increasing virus threats,

no text attachments will be accepted. Photograph attachments are permissible.

Please make articles concise. Include the **who, what, when, where** details of the story, along with a contact person's address and telephone number.

Photographs may be color or black and white. Instant photos and digital printouts are not reproducible. Digital photos may be used if submitted as a JPEG file via either (a) e-mail, (b) three-and-a-half inch floppy disk, or (c) CD. Photos must be clear, sharp, and well-lighted.

All news items are subject to editing, and all photographs are subject to cropping. News items and/or photographs can be published one time only. Deadline for submitting news is one week prior to requested publication date.

Articles that are not date-sensitive will be published on a space-available basis. Requests to return photographs must be accompanied by a self-addressed, stamped envelope.

Submit news and photographs to The Baptist Record, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. FAX: (601) 292-3330. E-mail: baptistrecord@mbcb.org.

THE BAPTIST  
**Record**



# PRACTICAL PRINCIPLES



for Christian Living

Volume 2

A MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF THE CHRISTIAN ACTION COMMISSION OF THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION

Issue 5

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## THE LINK BETWEEN HOMOSEXUALITY AND PEDOPHILIA: *statistics they want you to ignore*

"Therefore God gave them over in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, that their bodies might be dishonored among them. For they exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever, Amen. For this reason God gave them over to degrading passions; for their women exchanged natural function for that which is unnatural, and in the same way also the men abandoned the natural function of the woman and burned in their desire toward one another, men with men committing indecent acts and receiving in their own persons the due penalty of their error."

— Romans 1:24-27

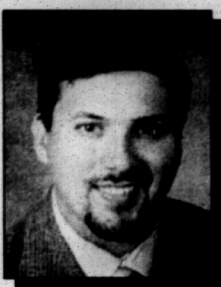
"You shall not lie with a male as one lies with a female; it is an abomination."

— Leviticus 18:22

The most heinous, lecherous, salacious act that could occur is pedophilia initiated by a handful of clergy upon children. In those few cases, praying hands have become preying hands.

These acts must not be tolerated anywhere. Unthinkable as it is, many churches are turning a blind eye to homosexuals who bring a propensity toward pedophilia.

For two decades now, Catholic dioceses have secretly laid out millions to hush up sexual abuse by priests according to TIME magazine: "In



Yancey

Boston, \$20 million to \$30 million to settle 86 claims against defrocked priest John Geoghan; in Santa Fe, \$50 million to settle some 40-45 abuse cases; in Dallas, \$23 million to settle suits by 11 victims of ex-priest Rudolph Kos; in Lafayette, LA, \$18 million to settle 70 cases against jailed priest Gilbert Gauthier; and in Los Angeles, \$5.2 million to settle one claim against priest Michael Harris."

When tithes and offerings are used for hush money because of pedophilia in the church, we have entered the realm of the unholy. I believe Jesus would do more than turn over the moneychangers' tables. The house of prayer became a den of thieves and is now a haven for child molesters. It's time for a millstone to be tied around some necks.

The Family Research Council reported that homosexuality is linked to pedophilia. "Father Richard John Neuhaus said, 'The overwhelming majority of these cases involve homosexuality, but the media steers away.' Research confirms the disturbing link between pedophilia and homosexuality. In the Gay Report, homosexual authors K. Jay and A. Young found that 73% of gays they surveyed had had sexual relations with boys 16 to 19 years of age. The Clarke Institute of Psychiatry calculated that 34% of the offenders against children were gay."

Same-sex attraction to minors may stem from their own sexual experiences. Research shows that very often homosexuals had their own initial same-sex encounter with an adult while children. In the only study in which perpetrators were asked to declare their sexual orientation (Erickson, Walbek, and Seely, 1988), 86% of child molesters identified themselves as homosexual or bisexual.

Three kinds of scientific evidence point to the proportion of homosexual molestation:

1. Survey reports of molestation in the general population.

2. Surveys of those caught and convicted of molestation.

3. What homosexuals themselves have reported.

These three lines of evidence suggest that the 1% to 3% of adults who practice homosexuality account for between a fifth and a third of all child molestation.

If about 2% of the population is responsible for 20% to 40% of something as socially and personally troubling as child molestation, something must be desperately wrong with that 2%.

Not every homosexual is a child molester, but enough gays do molest children so that the risk of a homosexual molesting a child is 10 to 20 times greater than that of a heterosexual.

To make matters worse the Supreme Court has ruled that a portion of the 1996 federal law that bans images of child porn is unconstitutional. The high court voted 6-3 to strike down a provision that banned visual depictions, including computer-generated images that appear to be minors engaged in explicit sex.

Richard Land, president of the Southern Baptist Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission said, "This decision by the Supreme Court marks a dark day for the court and an even darker day for our nation's children. This egregious and dangerous decision is one more sad illustration of the extent to which we have become a society that champions the so-called rights and privileges of adults over the protection and welfare of children. Child pornography, virtual or otherwise, leads people into addiction to child pornography."

Thankfully Attorney General John Ashcroft is working to create new laws



that would eliminate all types of child pornography.

Homosexuality continues to be a factor in the spread of AIDS. U.S. News and World Report stated in the June 11, 2001 issue that "nearly 15% of gay black men ages 23-29 become infected annually with HIV, the virus that causes AIDS, compared with 3.5% of Latinos and 2.5% of whites."

As the 21st anniversary of those first reported AIDS cases approaches, over 60 million have been infected with the AIDS virus. Of those, 21.8 million, including over half a million Americans, have died.

Homosexuality is a behavioral choice that is wrong in the eyes of God. It is a sin, like any other, which has consequences, some of which are deadly.

Not all homosexuals, but many, are pedophiles. Pedophilia is much more heinous because it involves an innocent child who has placed his or her trust in the hands of someone that turned out to be a sexual deviant with an appetite for children.

Convicted pedophiles should be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law.

If you are interested in receiving Christian Action updates via the internet and will share this information with friends and your church, please e-mail us at [rwood@mbcb.org](mailto:rwood@mbcb.org). Include your name, address, phone number, and church name.



# Love grows in missionaries for Kenya's lost

**BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (BP)** — The beauty of Kenya can be breathtaking. Bright white sand shimmers next to the clear surf of the Indian Ocean. The unique Rift Valley mixes lush forest with plains. Tea grows in fields of gorgeous green. The snow-capped peaks of Mount Kenya and Mount Kilimanjaro look down on giraffe, gazelle, and zebra that graze along Kenya's roadways.

Bob and Linda Allen enjoy watching the colobus monkeys that play in trees behind their house in Tigoni. "The trees, flowers and landscape are amazing," Linda says. However, it's not the inherent beauty of their adopted country that these missionaries love most.

"What we love most about living in Kenya is Kenyans," Linda said. "They are kind and hospitable people. Many are very open to hearing and responding to the gospel. Seeing God work in their lives is a thrill that never gets old."

Knowing that missionaries can never reach all Africans with the Gospel, the Allens have focused on equipping African believers to reach their own people.

They have helped restart one church and begin two others. They have trained pastors and pastors' wives and have worked with IMB missionaries who are learning some of the more than 60 languages and dialects used in Kenya alone [there are more than 590 languages and dialects in Eastern Africa]. They have worked with veteran missionaries in continuing training.

They have concentrated on working with the Kikuyu, the predominant people of the Tigoni area. There are approximately 5.3 million Kikuyu, the largest tribe in Kenya.

Approximately 1.6 million of them do not

know Christ as Lord and Savior, and 2.6 million are members of churches that are not considered evangelical.

Mostly farmers and business people who often exist at a subsistence level, a growing number of Kikuyu are moving into the middle- and upper-income brackets of Kenyan society. This key group can reach many others with the Gospel.

Almost since arriving in Kenya,

Linda has used her gifts to teach pastors' wives. She remembers when, in 1981, the Allens moved from seminary to full-time ministry in Thomson, Ga. Linda found it difficult to adjust to life as a minister's wife.

"It seemed such an all-consuming job," Linda recounted. "I resented the time Bob spent on church business. I was a young mother in a town where I didn't know anyone. God used a pastor's wife in another town to help me get my focus back. I grew a great deal during that period of time and realized that there could be great joy in accepting God's plan for Bob's life as well as my own."

Later, Linda found herself on the other side of the globe, ministering to pastors' wives struggling with their churches' high expectations. "Many (Kenyan) pastors' wives are new Christians, have had minimal or no education, and are terrified of taking on any responsi-

bilities in the local church," Linda says.

"One of my former students shared that she was so afraid someone would call on her to lead a song or to pray in church that she would go outside when the service began and stay out there until the service was over. She was thrilled that after three years of meeting together

with other pastors' wives from her area that she was not afraid anymore. She said she was ready for anything that God called her to do in her local church."

Although Bob and Linda love Kenya and its people, there are difficulties living there. They don't consider any of this true sacrifice.

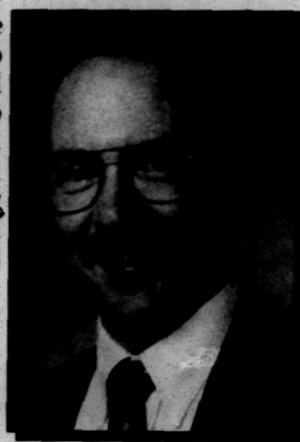
"There is, however, one part of international missions that, for us, is a sacrifice and that is being away from family, especially in times of illness and crisis," Bob says.

For the first time, the Allens are leaving both of their children in the U.S. while they go back to Kenya.

*Editor's note: Reprinted from the June 2002 issue of Missions Mosaic, Woman's Missionary Union, Birmingham, Ala. Used by permission. To receive this issue or subscribe to Missions Mosaic, call (800) 968-7301*



**FRIENDLY KENYANS** — Bob and Linda Allen believe their missionary work in Kenya has been made easier by the friendliness of the people, some of whom as pictured here welcoming the Allens to their village. (BP photo)



**Bob Allen**



**Linda Allen**

## Seminary graduate drawn to Bible translation

**LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP)** — What some Christians find hard to believe, Southern Seminary graduate Jenny James knows to be true: More than 380 million people in the world have no Bible translation in their own language.

"There are people who don't have Scripture," said James, a South Dakota native who graduated from the Louisville, Ky., school with a master of theology degree May 17.

James' heart breaks when she thinks about those who have never read God's Word. Her heart also breaks when she sees Christians who fail to make Scripture a central part of their own spiritual life.

"I think to most people it doesn't seem that tragic because they don't depend upon their own Bibles as much as they should," she said, "(but) if it is something that sustains them and something they drink from daily, then it will seem tragic."

James wants to help give that Living Water to those who currently live without hope. She hopes to do translation work overseas — taking the Bible's original languages of Hebrew and Greek and translating them into one of the many languages that currently have no Scripture.

James, who had already graduated with a master of divinity degree, focused on the Old Testament languages in her master of theology track.

"I like learning in general," she said. "I came here and enjoyed Greek. I enjoyed Hebrew, too. I guess when I had Dr. (Russell) Fuller he just pushed me a lot. I liked Hebrew

and I started taking more and more Hebrew."

A trip to a closed country in Southeast Asia last summer helped James witness first-hand the work of translators. She spent six weeks there with Wycliffe Bible Translators' Discovery program. She spent another two weeks in the country with a missions team from Southern Seminary.

The Wycliffe program is designed for those who are considering service as a Bible translator.

"I wanted to see the daily challenges of a translator — not just how to do the translation work, but what their days are like," she said. "How they get the translations done is a huge part of that, but you get a much more realistic picture when you talk to translators who have worked with Wycliffe for 40 years and who have faced challenges of all sorts."

"It gave me a much more realistic picture of the sacrifices and joys I will experience. I hope this will help me to be more dedicated and focused in my preparation for this work."

James is praying about where her next step will lead. One option is to be a translator with Wycliffe through the International Mission Board.



**TRANSLATING THE GOOD NEWS** — Southern Seminary graduate Jenny James poses with residents of a village during her trip to Southeast Asia in the summer of 2001. The trip, sponsored by Wycliffe Bible Translators, is designed for those with an interest in translation work. (BP photo)

### Bibliocipher

By Charles Marx  
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ELY BCTIT ELTUCQPLO  
TEPY ILWM WRCN, WRCV  
WREW EQC URMZC LCCY  
LMW E FRVTPXPEL; KIW  
WRCV WREW EQC TPXA.  
ZIAC JPSC: WRPQWV-MLC

Clue: U = W

Have fun with cryptography and exercise your Bible knowledge. A King James Version Bible verse has been encoded by letter substitution. The same letter is substituted throughout the puzzle. Solve by trial and error. Answer to last week's puzzle: Mark Eight: Thirty-Six.